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To the Graduate Program:

This project, entitled “Using Digital Learning Tools to Develop Literacy for English Language Learners in K-2” and written by Karla Vanessa Villeda Fernández, is presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

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Paula Wilder, Advisor

We have reviewed this
Project and recommend its
acceptance

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USING DIGITAL LEARNING TOOLS TO DEVELOP LITERACY FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN K-2

Presented to
the Graduate Program
of
Greensboro College

In partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by
Karla Vanessa Villeda Fernández

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Advisor: Professor Paula Wilder

Abstract

In the 21st century, the integration of technology in the classroom has been highly significant. Technology makes a positive impact on the students´ learning and gives opportunities to students to make learning more interesting and fun. Literacy development is crucial when students are in K-2 classrooms; however, using digital tools provides English language learners opportunities to develop their speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills in a different way. Additionally, the effective use of technology in the classroom increase learning language and encourage collaboration, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and culture. Moreover, it is essential that educators foster a digital learning environment in their classroom for English language learners in kindergarten to second grade. The purpose of this paper is to present a website that provides digital learning tools for teachers to integrate them into their teaching practice by using the SAMR model and fostering the flipped classroom instructional model. Through the implementation of technology, teachers can have easy access to digital learning tools to teach the content and substitute didactical materials such as flashcards, books, papers, and other concrete resources. Furthermore, this website serves as a fundamental tool for teachers to increase their technological skills and knowledge about technology.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, my father, my sisters, my brother, my husband, and my baby that is on the way. I appreciate all that they have done for me during this time, their love and support were fundamental to complete this thesis.

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Chapter One: Introduction

In the 21st century, technology is fundamental in education, especially for ELLs (English language learners) because technology helps students to cultivate different skills and to acquire the new language effectively. According to Kearns Burke (2015) technology is defined as hardware, software, equipment, and tools that assist students and teachers in their tasks throughout the school day, and these tools are considered as important themes in education, especially in kindergarten through second grade. During these early years, children are developing their creativity, emotions, and curiosity about the world that is around them and about learning.

Parris et al. (2017) stated that it is essential that in the 21st century educators foster a digital learning environment in the classroom that provides opportunities for students´ communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness (5 C´s) in order to master the new language. Kearns Burke (2015) noted that it is the responsibility of educators to expand literacy using technological tools in order to create relevant, timely learning experiences during the school. Allen (2016) expressed that elementary school literacy provides fertile ground for exploring the intersection of technology and literacy. Literacy, as defined by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), has four strands: reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. These skills are essential in the literacy process; therefore, the integration of digital tools in the classroom will provide a positive support for ELLs to develop these skills successfully.

Over the last years of my teaching experience, I have been working with EFL/ESL K-2 students in Honduras and in the U.S. My first teaching experience was in my home country in a small school. This school had a computer lab for upper grades but did not have access for

K-2 students; however, as a beginner teacher I was not familiar with using technology tools in my teaching practice.

My second teaching experience was in a global school in the U.S. where I have been working for five years. One of my initial experiences integrating technology with literacy was when I taught kindergarten. At that school, the integration of digital tools in K-2 was very important. As an international teacher, I was trained in different digital tools to implement in my classroom. The main focus for the school was to develop literacy skills for ELLs. During these five years, I had the opportunity to teach in K-2 classrooms. Then I was able to share what I learned with other teachers. This experience helped me to grow as a teacher and to understand the importance of the integration of technology into the classroom. Moreover, this practice helped my ELL students to develop their literacy skills. After that, my ELLs students increased their engagement in reading and writing and had deepened comprehension of stories, so I began to search out other ways to integrate technology into literacy instruction. Furthermore, the school continued training educators to integrate digital tools in their teaching practice. As a result of these experiences, I have learned a variety of digital tools to implement in the teaching practice and to develop students´ literacy skills. However, some teachers struggle with technology and are hesitant to be at the forefront of technology. Also, teachers are not motivated enough to integrate technology in their classroom, and some of them think that technology is a waste of time because they have to plan, find, and be prepared to use digital tools into their teaching lessons.

The purpose of this project is to offer teachers a variety of digital tools to use in their classrooms to develop literacy for ELLs in kindergarten through second grade (K-2). Since many teachers struggle to find specific digital tools to enhance instruction in their classroom, my final project is the creation of a website with a variety of technological tools for teachers to integrate into their teaching practice. This website increases teachers´ technology skills and

supports them in their instruction. They can find many useful resources to reinforce students´ literacy skills in K-2 in an easy way. Students can practice their listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills with the use of different apps on the website. With these digital tools, teachers can use them in the classroom and also teachers can provide homework for students to continue practicing at home and foster a technological environment in both settings. Additionally, I believe that with the creation of the website, I can reach and encourage many teachers to foster a digital learning environment in their school, classroom, and teaching and learning instruction no matter where they are. Moreover, many people can benefit from it, such teachers, students, parents, principals, and instructional coaches.

This project is important because I want to make it possible for teachers to create a happy, fun, and engaging environment in their classroom for ELLs through technology. Besides, teachers will discover that they do not need to have students sitting down receiving information, reading books, and writing on papers all the time rather students can explore digital tools that help them to develop those skills in a different and fun way.

I consider that this topic is important because it allows teachers and students to interact with different technological devices, such as Smartboards, computers, tablets, and iPads that help them to enjoy literacy, improve their academic outcomes, become active learners in the classroom, and be able to solve problems, think critically, and work collaboratively. At the same time, they develop the ability to use devices and technology tools that can help them in their future to become experts in this technology field.

Often ELLs face difficulties in their literacy because they showed deficiency in their literacy skills, vocabulary, and understanding of the language. During K-2, many ELLs have acquired previous knowledge of literacy skills in their native language; however, they need to develop they literacy skills in English by integrating vocabulary, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, and speaking fluency. Parris et al. (2017) exposed the importance of

understanding ELLs. There are many factors that interfere in their academic process, such as their immigration status, prior schooling, level of language proficiency in their native tongue, or in other language, level of literacy, level of language in English, and their learning trajectory. According to these factors, educators need to take into consideration all individual student needs in order to support ELLs´ learning in the school by providing differentiated strategies to meet their needs, such as with the integration of technology into daily classroom teaching.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

In this chapter, I review the literature related to the use of technological tools to develop literacy for English language learners (ELLs) in K-2. First, I begin discussing the digital learning environment that teachers need to foster in their teaching instruction. Subsequently, I discuss the importance of understanding English language learners in the classroom, including some factors that influence their learning process. I then point out the development of literacy in the early years by implementing the SAMR Model for Technology Integration. Finally, I explain the flipping classroom instructional model including the integration of the 21st century skills for ELLs.

Digital Learning Environment

Providing a digital learning environment in K-2 classrooms is essential for ELLs´ literacy development. Minicozzi (2018) stated that in the 21st-century teacher candidates need opportunities to develop knowledge about meaningful technology integration to build confidence and positive dispositions toward technology and learning. When early childhood teachers are actively involved with classroom technology integration, students make gains in cognitive, literacy, and language domains (McManis & Gunnewig, 2012). By integrating technology in the classroom, students share and interact with their peers and teachers, enjoy learning, and are more encouraged to learn in the school. ¨Learning happens anywhere and can be formal and informal. The change from passive to active learning, and the tensions created in the process affect teaching and learning strategies, technologies, and space¨ (Steelcase, 2014, p. 4).

Teacher Engagement

To deliver effective teaching instruction teachers must be prepared and trained to provide adequate technology tools integration in the classroom along with the appropriate pedagogical strategies for young children learners. Parris et al. (2017) pointed out that educators are the ones who guide students in their learning. A digital learning environment requires teachers to enhance and support their instructions with innovative ways to use classroom technology tools. Minicozzi (2018) indicated that educators need preparation, not only in the use of technology tools, but also in building subject area knowledge (content) and methodology practices (pedagogical knowledge). Teachers will develop their skills and provide students with better learning experiences.

Further, Shulman (1987) proposed a framework that is the concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). As many innovative technologies have used into the classrooms, Koehler et al. (2009) suggested adding the term TK because the teaching and learning take place with the content, pedagogy, and technology. This framework, named technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK), recognizes that technology integration alters the teaching and learning process (Koehler et al., 2009). TK includes developing skills and competencies that each individual need to know to operate technology in the classroom. Moreover, this learning ability about technology continually changes over time. Thus, teachers need to increase their knowledge of technology to have the chance to use it in the classroom and provide better learning and teaching opportunities. However, for many teachers, integrating technology can be overwhelming while they fulfill other responsibilities related to school meetings, assessments, delivery of content, management of student behavior, and other activities at school. Eventually, educators will recognize and understand that integrating technology in their teaching will bring many benefits for each student. Also,

they will understand that every effort will make a difference in their instruction (Parris et al., 2017).

Understanding ELLs in the Classroom

According to Gustad (2014), ELLs are a group of students who have a far more daunting academic challenge than students who are native speakers of English. ELLs face different challenges in the classroom; they are expected to learn English while they simultaneously learn the content from the multiple disciplines. Furthermore, they are expected to learn at the same pace as their classmates who are native speakers. Moon (2010) exposed that many ELLs in the classroom do not speak, understand, or write English with the same ability as those students who are native English speakers. Therefore, educators need to understand that ELLs with low English proficiency will struggle more to learn the content. Moreover, Bedard et al., (2011) pointed out that English learners come to school with previous experiences, skills, and backgrounds. Thus, teachers need to encourage students to link those past experiences and knowledge in their learning process.

Honigsfeld and Dove (2015) suggested six different factors that educators need to know to understand ELLs. These include:

1. Immigration status: ELLs that recently arrived in the United States under typical circumstances such a refugee, without legal documentation, temporarily living in the United States or visiting the country.
2. Prior education: ELLs that have formal, limited, or interrupted schooling in another country or U.S schools.
3. Linguistic development in the language(s) other than English: ELLs that are monolingual in their native language, bilingual in two languages other than English or multilingual in more than three languages.

4. Status of language proficiency and literacy in the language(s) other than English: these involve only receptive language skills, productive oral language skills, limited literacy skills, grade-level literacy skills and any or all of the above skills in another language other than English.
5. Level of English language proficiency: ELLs that are in an emerging standard has exposed to English with no or minimal language production, the ones who are in a beginning level demonstrate receptive and emerging productive language skills, students that are developing the level of English employing necessary oral and writing language skills, the ones that are in an expanding level using more advance oral and written language skills with few errors and the last one are the students in a transitioning level of English that have to approximate native language proficiency.
6. Learning trajectory: English learners that demonstrate academic and linguistic development trajectories. Similarly, children that show academic and linguistic developmental challenges and difficulties that respond to interventions. Further, students who demonstrate academic and linguistic developmental problems and challenges that require special attention. (p. 4)

The purpose of these essential elements is to alert educators that ELLs have unique background experiences and cultural knowledge that they bring into the classroom. Teachers need to be aware of these factors because they may encounter different difficulties while they work with ELLs. Furthermore, Parris et al. (2017) suggested that the use of digital tools used in the classroom with ELLs need to be selected, adjusted, or modified appropriately according to the needs of each ELL. Moreover, Coleman and Goldenberg (2012) recommended that educators provide opportunities for ELLs to interact with proficient English speakers. These will help them to overcome some of their challenges, develop their English language skills, and learn about their cultures, knowledge, and backgrounds.

Literacy Development for ELLs in K-2

Literacy is a process that involves reading and writing. Piaget (1969) stated that significant learning takes place in the child from birth through 8 years. According to Goldenberg (2008), ELLs need explicit instruction similar to that of their native English speakers, including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Henry et al. (2004) hold the position that successful learning in literacy for ELLs in kindergarten to second grade requires making connections with the child's language, culture, and home life. However, other studies have shown that the integration of technology supports the process of reading and writing. Furthermore, integrating technology motivates students to develop literacy by using electronic books and digital tools to build their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in their early years (Asselin & Lee, (2002, 12). Marsh (2005) noted that digital tools have the potential to improve literacy development for ELLs in kindergarten through second grade. Moreover, Kearns Burke (2015) found that many teachers use technology tools to teach literacy instruction. They use technology to model decoding strategies, practice phonics skills, and conduct interactive read aloud.

Kearns Burke (2015) indicated that using digital tools in the classroom allows ELLs in the first years of schooling to access academic content in a new and fun way. It enables them to promote their language skills in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides, presenting the content using digital tools bring added benefits to them. It helps ELLs to retain information and addresses the need to reinforce vocabulary development, comprehension, and background knowledge. Peffer et al. (2013) noted that integrating technology tools into the classroom helps to promote learning, understanding, innovation, critical thinking, and engagement, especially on those concepts that could be more difficult to understand.

Li (2016) demonstrated that to provide quality instruction to ELLs in their first school years, it is necessary to promote collaborative literacy development. Teachers can increase ELL reading by doing read-aloud and literature circles. It is also valuable to offer activities for ELLs to interact with peers that are native speakers to develop their different skills in the target language. Furthermore, teachers need to understand that ELLs are in the process of learning English. They will have different challenges to develop their listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. In the listening process, Li (2106) stated that often, some of the ELLs need to work harder than others when it comes to focus and attention. Listening requires extra concentration, and it could be difficult for ELLs because they hear different accents within English. Additionally, ELLs are challenged by hearing the sounds in English because some sounds do not exist or are different in their native language. In the speaking process, speaking is one of the harder skills to develop for ELLs because it requires talking, and for some of them, this action is challenging. Speaking requires that ELLs have time to practice with native speakers to develop this skill appropriately. When ELLs build their oral language in English, it becomes easier for them to improve their reading and writing. Therefore, teachers need to provide adequate instruction to develop their oral language.

Li (2016) indicated that ELLs struggle in reading because they have a density of unfamiliar vocabulary, word order, and sentence structure, which is different in English than in their native language. Teachers need to provide activities such as sight words, phonics, vocabulary words with pictures, and reading short stories to facilitate their reading process. In writing, ELLs tend to write how they hear the words in their native language, and they struggle with sentence structure and organizing their thought while they write. Therefore, teachers must provide direct instruction in all aspects of the writing process and support ELLs with scaffolding techniques. Modeling, guiding, and using writing prompts following by the

writing steps are stages of instruction that will help ELLs to develop their writing skills (pp. 52-54).

Furthermore, to meet the challenges in literacy development in K-2, teachers should use digital tools to provide a lower anxiety environment in the classroom. Digital tools also give the students the ability to view and make connections to spoken and written language (Parris et al., 2017).

Technological tools support literacy skills for ELLs in kindergarten to second grade. Parris et al. (2017) indicated that using digital tools to develop listening skills gives ELLs the opportunity to hear the English language, and the tools allow them to control the rate and to pause and repeat the listening activities. In reading, ELLs can use digital tools to read electronic texts and e-books to take in, interpret, and relate them to their own previous experiences (Parris et al., 2017). Online resources also provide resources to ELLs to help them learn and read according to their specific reading levels. In viewing, it requires skills similar to reading comprehension. This category includes everything from images to video presentations that help them to gain a better understanding of concepts. Parris et al. (2017) explained that using digital tools to develop speaking skills allows ELLs to orally communicate their thoughts clearly and effectively using multiple digital tools. Students can also narrate digital stories, create presentations and videos to improve their speaking skills throughout technology. In writing, through the use of digital tools, students can practice their writing skills in a more supportive and low anxiety environment. Many applications allow students to trace or write letters, words, and sentences, thereby facilitating their writing in a fun way (Parris, et al., 2017, p. 27).

The SAMR Model

Green (2014) indicated that Dr. Ruben Puentedura in 2006 created a prevalent model for educators to integrate technology in their classroom. This model is called SAMR. Puentedura (2006) designed this model to guide educators through four levels of technology integration, Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition (SAMR). This model helps students to develop literacy through using technological tools (Patton, 2015). The SAMR model utilizes a pedagogical approach to integrating teaching, learning, and technology within the classroom (Jude et al., 2014). The SARM model guides educators when selecting technology tools with the students, and it helps them to differentiate instruction (Romrell et al., 2014).

The SAMR model can be used by teachers who are beginners in the use of technology. Jude et al. (2014) noted that educators can start by substituting paper materials for generating digital materials. Teachers often have to create and use flashcards to teach vocabulary, especially in K-2. Instead of using these materials, they can create and apply digital flashcards to teach and reinforce vocabulary as a substitution. The SAMR model also will allow ELLs in K-2 to enhance the content engagingly (Romrell et al., 2014). Parris et al. (2017) explained that in the argumentation level, students can create an e-book that includes video and audio enabling students to practice and learn vocabulary and to improve their reading and writing skills. In the modification level, technology allows for significant task redesign. Teachers reproduce or significantly modify the student task with social networking and collaboration. Students can collaborate online and create or publish content that includes vocabulary definitions, videos, audio, or other information according to the content. The last level is redefinition, which allows students to interact and engage in learning a deeper level of research and study on their own. Students can interact with other people in another country by video calls and share their language, culture, and believes (Parris et al., 2017, p. 39).

Puentedura (2006) explained that the first two levels, substitution and augmentation, offer an enhancement to previous practice, whereas the second two levels, modification and redefinition, provide more significant changes that transform traditional methods.

The Flipping Classroom Instructional Model

Prensky (2008) stated that students are often using technology at school and home. One way to integrate technology in and out of the classroom is through flipped classrooms. This instructional model promotes student's language, content acquisition, and enhances learning through collaboration (Goodwin & Miller, 2013). Currently, students are consistently using technology; therefore, implementing a flipped classroom teaching style will allow students to learn in a manner that is relevant to them (Cashin, 2016). According to Prensky (2010) young children are able to understand the functionality of digital tools at earlier ages. Additionally, Prensky (2010) stated that in flipping the classroom, ELLs have more opportunities to develop their critical thinking in English and to use English to connect with their peers to acquire knowledge. Teachers can choose how to implement flipping for their students' best interests. Using the flipping classroom model can include the completion of any homework, the creation of videos by recording different types of direct instructions, or sharing videos with vocabulary, reading texts, or comprehension questions (Prensky, 2010).

Furthermore, students have the opportunity to create their videos and share them with their teacher and classmates using various technological tools. These allow teachers to scaffold and differentiate the instruction for the unique language needs of ELLs (Parris et al., 2017). One of the benefits of using the flipping classroom instructional model is that ELLs can go ahead or go back to watch the videos as many times as they need. It engages students in the classroom and at home and promotes collaboration with students, peers, teachers, and parents. Integrating flipped classrooms helps teachers to track students' progress and collect

information about their students using different technological tools and resources. Besides, if students do not have access to technology devices at home, teachers can provide a flipped learning to ELLs after school or visiting the public library to complete their tasks (Ash, 2012).

Cashin (2016) noted that flipping the classroom instructional model promotes the 4 C´s for 21st Century learning, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. The 4 C´s can be integrated into the instructional practices for ELLs and enhanced by adding a fifth C for culture. Critical thinking assists ELLs in developing background knowledge and using technology to reduce or remove language barriers. ELLs will be able to solve problems and find solutions. Throughout communication, ELLs have the opportunity to share their thoughts, ask questions, and discuss ideas by using digital tools (Parris et al. 2017, p. 67). Cashin (2016) explained that the flipping classroom model fosters collaboration. ELLs can create projects that allow them to work with their teachers, peers, and parents.

Moreover, Schmidt and Ralph (2016) found that the parents were able to learn as the students were learning through the flipped videos, homework, and other assignments. Additionally, if the student was absent, they could review the work before going back to school. Through creativity, ELLs can express their thoughts, ideas, and content knowledge creatively by using the flipped classroom model. Also, they can use their target language to make real-life connections to learning. In addition, culture can be added as part of this learning model since ELLs bring rich cultural experiences into the classroom. By designing collaborative projects through the flipped classroom model, ELLs demonstrate acceptance and appreciation for cultural diversity (Parris et al. 2017).

Conclusion

Through implementing digital tools for ELLs in K-2 classrooms teachers can integrate effective instruction in the way that they meet educational goals for the 21st century learning (Kaumbulu, 2011). Valmont (2003) stated that when digital tools are used appropriately, responding to the developmental level of the child and corresponding pedagogy, these tools have the potential to provide cognitive support in the development of literacy.

Studies have shown that technological tools improve literacy in early childhood learning and provide multiple reading and writing experiences for ELLs. Piaget (1969) exposed that the literacy process during infancy and throughout the child´s growth is tremendously significant. Also, Piaget (1969) noted that constructivist learning theories support technology integration where it provides opportunities for children to construct new knowledge based on prior experiences.

However, Kaumbulu (2011) found that digital tools bring various benefits to the students. Technological tools motivate and engage students in their learning, promote literacy in a meaningful way, and provide a positive impact on the children´ life. Finally, studies have shown that since many teachers are not familiar with technology and the impact that this will bring to the students, teachers need to understand how significant the integration of technological tools in the classroom is and how important this integration is for student learning.

Chapter Three: Project Design

In this chapter, I will explain the design of a website that will benefit teachers in the implementation of technology in and out of the classroom. This website provides digital tools to develop literacy for English language learners (ELLs) in K-2 using the SAMR model created by Dr. Puentedura in 2006. The SAMR model guides educators to implement the appropriate digital tools in their instruction and helps ELLs to develop their literacy skills. Additionally, this website promotes the use of the flipped classroom instructional model that allows students and educators to foster a digital environment at school and home.

The reason for the designing of the website is to offer educators different digital tools that will allow them to substitute learning materials such as books, flashcards, and writing papers by using technology. Furthermore, many authors have exposed that some teachers are refusing to use technology in their classroom for many reasons:

1. Lack of professional development to expand literacy through technology.
2. Difficulties in using digital tools in the early years.
3. Resistance to integrate technology due to their personal beliefs.
4. Insufficient time to implement technology in the classroom due to the busy schedule. (Parris et al., 2017; Koehler et al., 2009; Kearns Burke, 2015).

Taking into consideration these factors which affect teachers to start integrating technology in the classroom, the creation of this website will facilitate teachers the use of digital tools in their instruction to develop students´ literacy skills to ELLs in kindergarten through second grade.

According to Coleman and Goldenberg (2012), many ELLs face different challenges at school. ELLs have the challenge of developing their English proficiency, oral comprehension, and learning academic content. With the creation of this website, ELLs will

find resources that will help them to overcome these challenges and improve their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in the English language.

This design of the website will be divided into three sections; the first one will be for teachers, the second one for students, and the third one for increasing literacy development through digital games. By having all these helpful resources available on the internet, many ELLs, teachers and parents will benefit from them. Moreover, this website can be used as a professional development for teachers to increase their knowledge about technology.

Section One: Teachers' Resources

In this section, teachers will find meaningful information that will guide them to integrate technology into their classrooms. Educators will find videos, tutorials, eBooks, and helpful information that will assist them in how to use the different digital tools in their instruction. Additionally, teachers will be able to learn how to create and share content with other colleagues and students. This section will promote the flipped classroom and SAMR model where teachers can teach the content in a fun and engaging way for ELLs.

Moreover, teachers will have easy access to information in this platform that will help them to deliver effective teaching to the students. Furthermore, by implementing technological tools in and out of the classroom, teachers will make content accessible for ELLs and promote an environment in which students learn by doing. Through this section, teachers will gain more technological and pedagogical knowledge, and they will be updated about the use of technology integration and prepare themselves to present the content to the students successfully using technology in the classroom.

Section Two: Students' Resources

In this section, students will find a variety of digital tools that they can use in the classroom and at home to foster vocabulary, reading, reading comprehension, writing,

listening, and speaking skills. ELLs will have the opportunity to practice vocabulary, listen and read eBooks, practice their writing by creating sentences and short stories, and watching videos to improve their English skills. Additionally, by having all these resources available at home, parents can learn the target language and be integrated into the education of their children. Moreover, when ELLs use digital tools at home, they will have the opportunity to make connections with the content they are learning in the classroom. The implementation of technology in and out of the school will promote students´ creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and culture (Parris et al., 2017).

Section Three: Interactive Learning Sites

In this section, there will be different digital games that ELLs can play to develop their language skills. Parris et al. (2017) affirmed that using a digital learning environment in and out of the classroom will motive and engage ELLs in their learning process. ELLs will be more interested in sharing their learning experiences regardless of their language proficiency and prior language. This section will help ELLs to learn content enjoyably and improve their different skills by playing different digital games. Also, the use of digital games will promote ELLs´ critical thinking and solving problems.

Conclusion

The development of this final project will facilitate teachers with the integration of technology in the classroom for ELLs in kindergarten through second grade. Teachers will increase their knowledge about technological tools and value the importance of using technology in their teaching instruction. ELLs will develop their literacy skills using different digital tools in the classroom and at home. The integration of technology will benefit ELLs to increase their vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Also, ELLs will

have the opportunity to foster collaborative learning by interacting with their peers and teacher in the classroom and with their parents at home using different digital tools.

Chapter Four: Project

The present project includes digital learning tools to guide teachers to implement them in and out of their classrooms. The goal of the creation of the website is to provide various digital learning tools to enhance literacy for English language learners (ELLs) in K-2. The website promotes the use of the SAMR model and the flipped classroom model that guides educators to implement technological tools in their instruction. By having these resources on the internet, many teachers, ELLs, parents, and others can benefit from them. Additionally, this website can facilitate a high number of teachers to integrate technology in the classroom and home for ELLs. The website can be accessed at the URL https://karlavilleda.wixsite.com/digitaltoolsforells

Section One: Teachers Resources

The teacher resources section contains various digital learning tools that include tutorials, videos, eBooks, and a short explication of the use of each online tool. The goal is that teachers learn how to use the tools efficiently. Also, to integrate the digital tools into their classrooms to support ELLs in the development of their literacy skills. These resources encourage teachers to use technology in their class and promote the flipped classroom and SAMR model where teachers replace concrete materials for digital tools.

1. **Reading A-Z**

Reading A-Z is a great digital tool. Educators can find helpful resources, such as eBooks in different languages, lesson plans, flashcards, worksheets, assessments, literacy curriculum, retelling rubric, poetry, rhymes, songs, and other significant information that helps them to develop their students´ literacy skills. Also, Reading A-Z allows teachers to manage students reading and track their progress. Teachers can use this resource and set up

their students to read eBooks in the classroom and at home. Additionally, students can listen, read, and answer comprehension questions of the books.

Reading A-Z helps teachers to determine the reading level of their students. The reading levels include independent level, instructional level, and frustrational level. The independent level is appropriate for the students that can read independently, which means that the reader needs a little or no instructional support. This level is usually used to build fluency and comprehension skills. The instructional level is for students that have difficulty in their reading. Students need instructional support from the teacher. It is recommended for small- group instruction where the teacher assists the students while they read. Finally, the frustrational level is the text in which more than ten words are difficult for the reader. This level is used when the reader needs extensive support, and it can be used when the teacher gives one-on-one instruction.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Reading A-Z in their classroom, and it explains all the information that this platform provides. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vb8Ix81S8f8

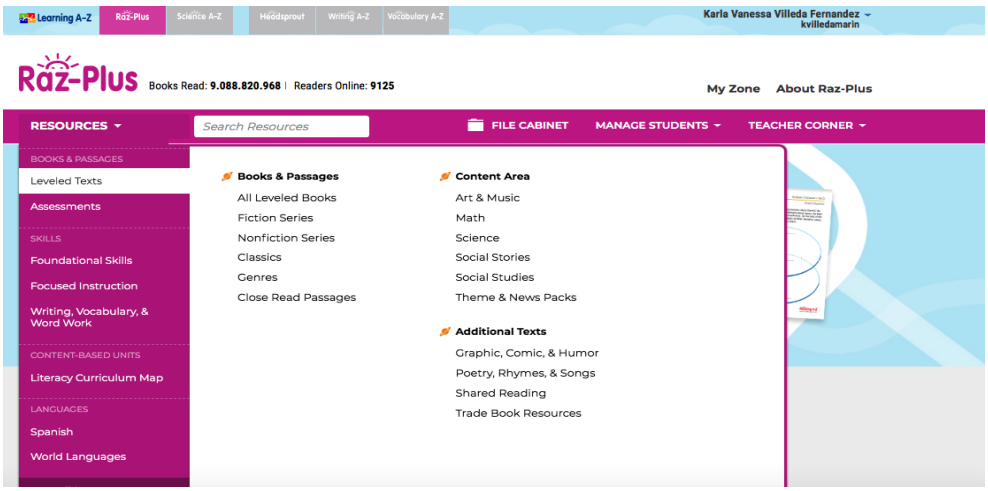

Figure 4.1 Screenshot of Reading A-Z Home Page

2. **BrainPop**

BrainPop is a great tool. BrainPop assists teachers to deliver the content in a different and fun way. This tool contains movies, educators' materials, games, quizzes, worksheets, and graphic organizers. BrainPop can be used in English, Spanish, and French. It includes BrainPop Jr for children in grades K-3, BrainPop ELL for non- native speakers learning English, and BrainPop for educators and parents. BrainPop Educators allows teachers to share lesson plans, posters, materials. This tool will enable students to develop their literacy skills by listening to animated stories, learning new vocabulary, and practicing their writing doing interactive exercises.

Moreover, this resource contains activities for beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. By using this tool, teachers can use digital flashcards, stories by watching movies, interactive comprehension questions, and writing practice. Also, the teacher can assess students using the quiz in each activity.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use BrainPop in their classroom, and it explains all the information that this platform provides. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzrnKJPaO6E

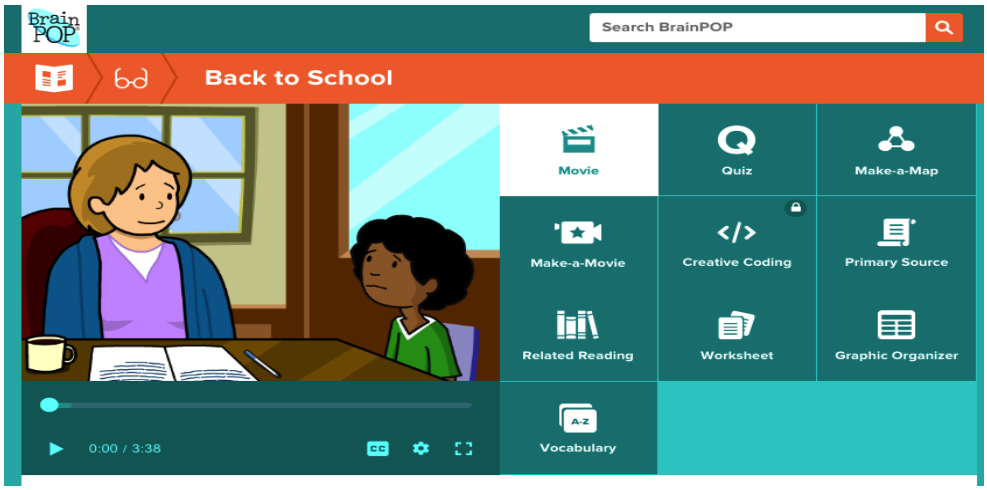

Figure 4.2 Screenshot of BrainPop Home Page

3. Interactive Learning Sites for Education

The Interactive Learning Site for Education is a great digital resource for educators that teach in K-2 classrooms. This tool has many engaging activities that help students to develop their literacy skills. This digital tool contains interactive activities in English and Spanish. Teachers can introduce content such as the alphabet, sight words, reading texts, spelling, vocabulary, writing, and more using different digital tools in this platform. These resources are beneficial for teachers to develop ELLs literacy skills in K-2 and to provide a technological environment in the classroom. Moreover, the activities that teachers can find promotes the 4C's, such as collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication, which is the goal of this project.

Students in the age of 5 to 8 years need to learn the contents in a fun and engaging way. Through this platform, they can interact with their classmates and teachers; at the same time, they can foster their language skills working together with their native English classmates and by listening to the English language using the different interactive activities. This resource promotes the development of their four literacy skills, which include reading, writings, listening, and speaking skills.

In the teacher tools section of this platform, teachers can find multiple tools to teach reading and writing. These digital tools include games, letter formation, phonics activities, spelling, and more. Also, the literacy tools help students to stimulate their imagination by doing an interactive word search, flashcards, hangman, word puzzle, matching games, story spinners, and more. Furthermore, in the Interactive Learning Site, there is a section where teachers can find presentation files about vital information to use in their classroom.

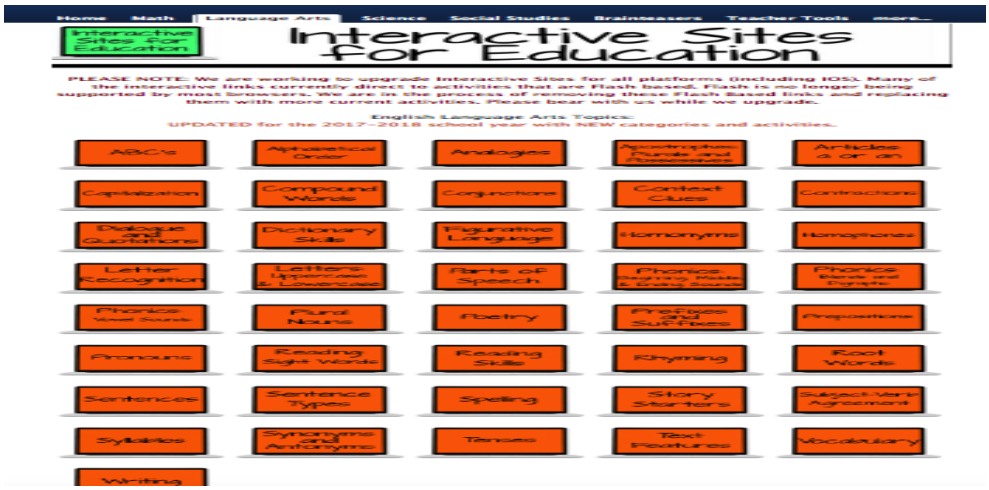

Figure 4.3 Screenshot of Interactive Sites for Education Home Page

4. **Funbrain**

Funbrain is an excellent tool for teachers to foster students' reading skills. This tool contains different free eBooks for K-2 students. Students can listen, read and answer comprehension questions from each book. Funbrain includes games where students can learn by playing. Also, it has videos where students can watch and listen the English language in order to develop their different skills in the target language.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Funbrain in their classroom. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uyWMcqbgZJA

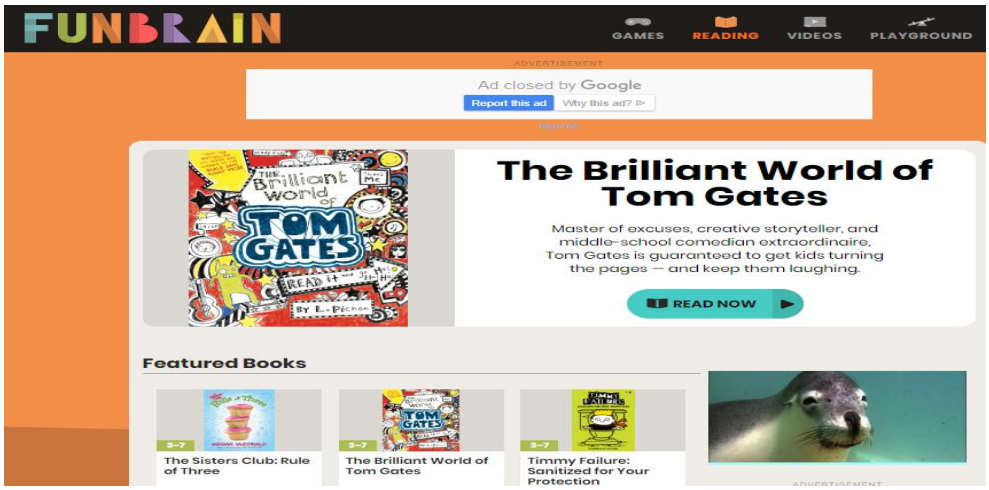

Figure 4.4 Screenshot of Funbrain Home Page

Figure 4.5 Screenshot of Funbrain for Kindergarten

Figure 4.6 Screenshot of Funbrain First Grade

Figure 4.7 Screenshot of Funbrain Second Grade

5. **Quizizz**

Quizizz is a formative assessment that teachers can use in K-2 classrooms. Quizizz allows teachers to assess students in an engaging way. Teachers can create their own quiz or use quizzes that are available in the platform. Students can play different games in their own space, they can use these games in the classroom or at home as a homework. Quizizz is a great formative assessment for teachers because they can give feedback to their students and gives grades. Also, this tool has a section for teacher resources where teachers can find meaningful information to use in their instruction.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Quizizz in their classroom.

https://youtu.be/TmqRCMPpHbA

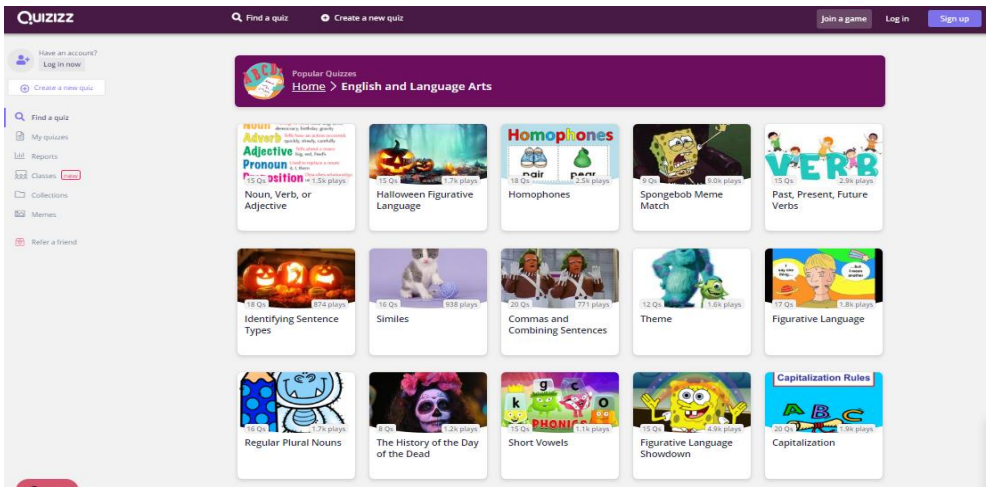

Figure 4.8 Screenshot of Quizizz Home Page

6. **Flippity**

Flippity is an excellent digital tool for teachers to develop reading and writing. Teachers can generate flashcards, quizzes, spelling activities, bingos, hangman games, matching games, and more. It is quick to create any exercise. The use of Flippity allows teachers to save time and complete tasks for students in a short period. Teachers can use

Flippity for different purposes. They can reinforce vocabulary by creating games, practice reading, and writing by using word searches, matching games, and more. Additionally, Flippity allows teachers to create formative assessments to measure students' progress.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Flippity in their classroom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsJaNeMb4gQ

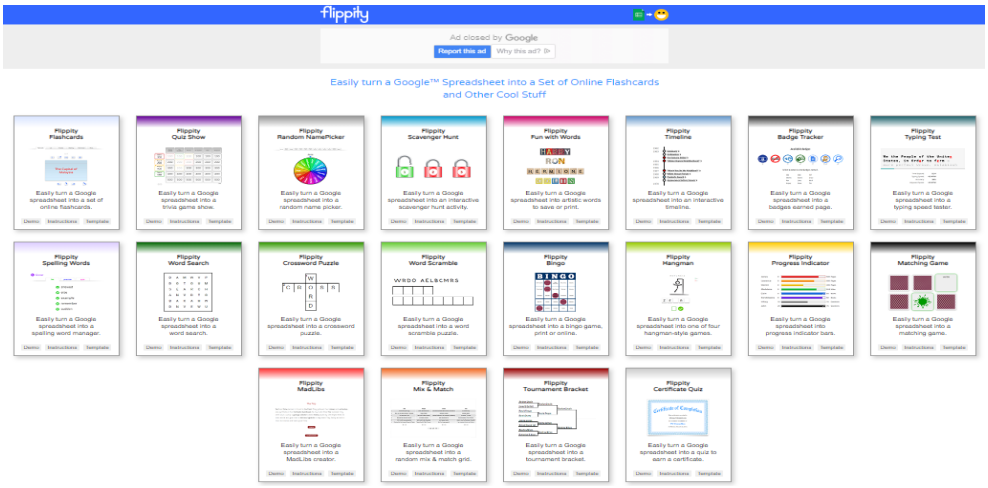

Figure 4.9 Screenshot of Flippity Home Page

7. **Edpuzzle**

Edpuzzle is a great digital tool for teachers and students. Edpuzzle allows teachers to create videos for different purposes. Teachers can create a video or use videos that are already in the platform and track students' comprehension skills. Edpuzzle has various interactive learning videos for teachers to include in their lesson plans. This tool keep students engage and learn the content in a fun and different way. Additionally, students can watch the videos as many times they need. The videos have different questions for students while they are watching the video. These videos reinforce students' comprehension, listening, speaking and reading skills.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Edpuzzle in their classroom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibRw6TR9iV8

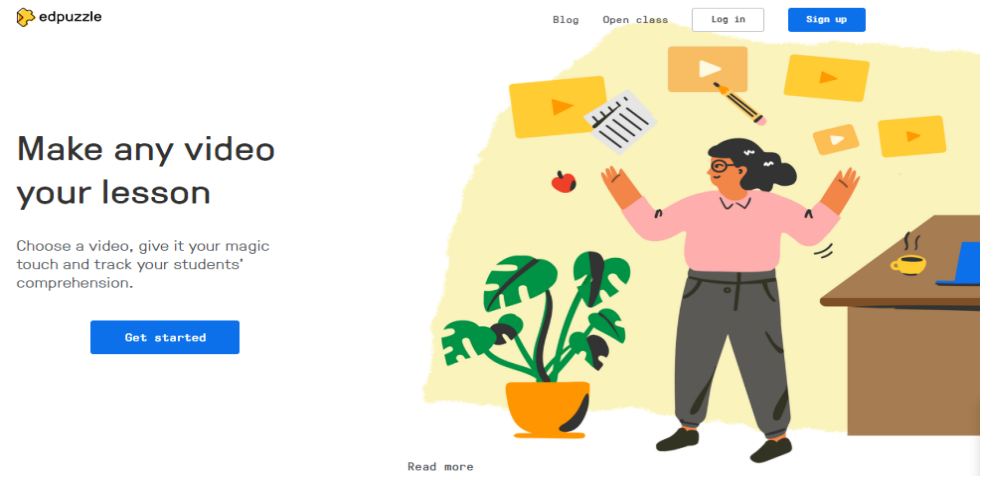

Figure 4.10 Screenshot of EdPuzzle Home Page

8. **Kid in Story**

Kid in Story Book maker is a tremendous tool for teacher to create stories with photos of their students or any other story. It is a creative way to make visual stories that support students' literacy. It is easy for teachers to create engaging and interactive stories using photos of their children. Also, Kid in Story is attractive for students because teachers create stories of them. These activities make students to understand the stories in a real life and identify characters, places, events in the story in a simple way. Moreover, this tool is for students as well, they can create and write their own stories or modify any of the stories that are in the platform. This digital learning tool allows students to develop their creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration in the classroom.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Kid in Story in their classroom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0-ZcYY2cSY&t=54s

Figure 4.11 Screenshot of Kids in Story Home Page

9. [Padlet]

Padlet is a collaborative digital tools for teachers and students. The participant can contribute by pinning different videos, links, texts. Padlet motivates students to work together and brainstorm like a team. Additionally, with Padlet teachers can create any question for students and they can share their opinion by writing their answers on the platform. Using Padlet students can read other students' opinions and learn from others.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Padlet in their classroom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0jcxg26onM

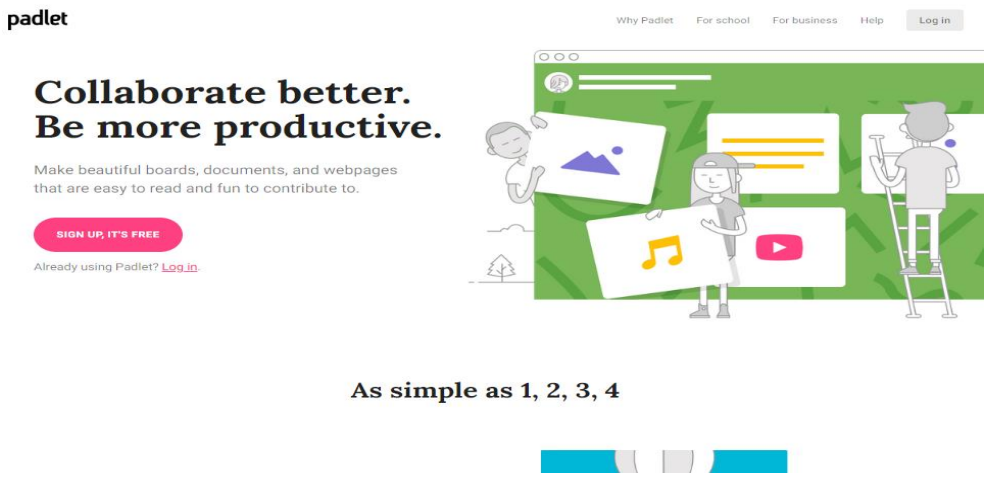

Figure 4.12 Screenshot of Padlet Home Page

10. [Jeopardylabs]

Jeopardylabs is an excellent tool for teachers to make a lesson fun. Teachers can create games online using a simple editor. Jeopardylabs allows students to learn collaboratively with their classmates and teachers. Teachers can make teams to answer the questions about the topic they are learning in class. Jeopardylabs can be used to foster reading, listening, and speaking skills. The teacher can create games after reading a book to allow students to retell the story by asking them questions using Jeopardylabs.

Moreover, this tool allows students to interact with their classmates and learn from them. It is fun and competitive. Teachers also can assess students through Jeopardylabs without students noticing.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Jeopardylabs in their classroom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzFyUQly2a4

Figure 4.13 Screenshot of Jeopardylabs Home Page

Section Two: Students Resources

The student resources section contains several digital learning tools that allows students to practice their reading, listening, speaking and writing skills in K-2. The goal is

that students learn the content in class in a fun and attractive way where they can learn and play at the same time. By using these digital learning tools students can be engaged in the classroom and reinforce the content in the class and at home.

1. **ABCYya**

ABCya has many activities for K-2 students to develop their literacy skills. This tools contains different games and activities where students can learn in a fun way. Students can play these activities in the class and at home. ABCya has interactive learning flashcards, sight words, stories, and more activities for students.

Figure 4.14 Screenshot of ABCya Home Page

2. **My Storybook**

My Storybook is a digital learning tool where students can create their own stories using characters, pictures, drawings, scenes, and writing. When students finish their digital books, they can share them with their classmates and teachers. This tool fosters the creativity of each student because they use their imagination to create stories about their interests. Additionally, My Storybook tool is simple to use for students in K-2 classroom. Definitely, this tool keeps students involved in class and helps them to learn in a fun way.

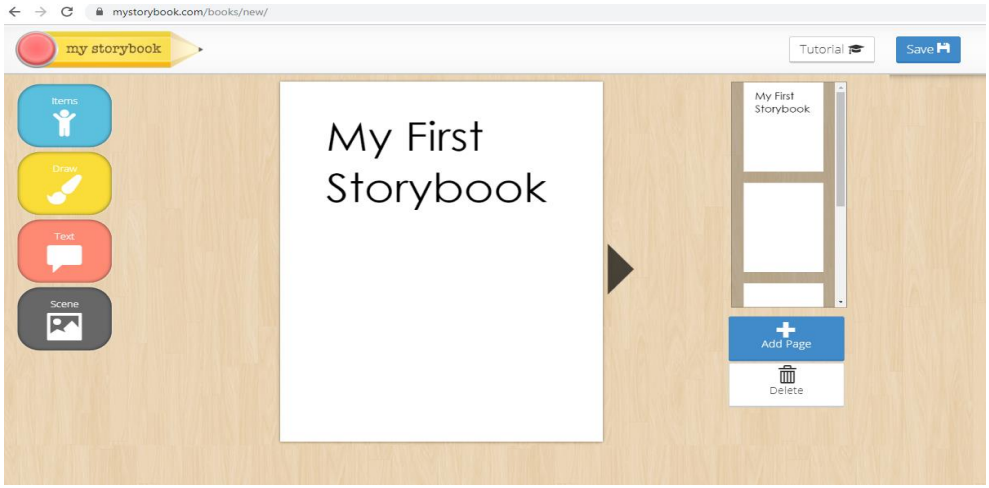

Figure 4.15 Screenshot of My Storybook Home Page

3. **PBSkids**

PBSkids is a learning digital tool that has different eBooks for students in K-2. This tool contains stories, games, videos and song. Students in K-2 can read and listen stories in an attractive way. Students can listen the stories as many times they need. Also, this platform has eBooks in different languages that allows ELLs to read books in the English and in their home language. Moreover, this tool is free to use in the classroom and at home. Parents can also be a great support for students and read eBooks with their child to help them build their reading skills.

Figure 4.16 Screenshot of PBSkids Home Page

Section Three: Interactive Learning Sites

1. **Learning Games for Kids**

This is a great digital learning tool for students in K-2. Leaning Games for Kids allows students to develop their literacy skills. The tool has educational songs, videos, vocabulary games, spelling games, literacy games and more. Learning Games for Kids is a tool that students can use in the classroom and at home to reinforce the content learned in class.

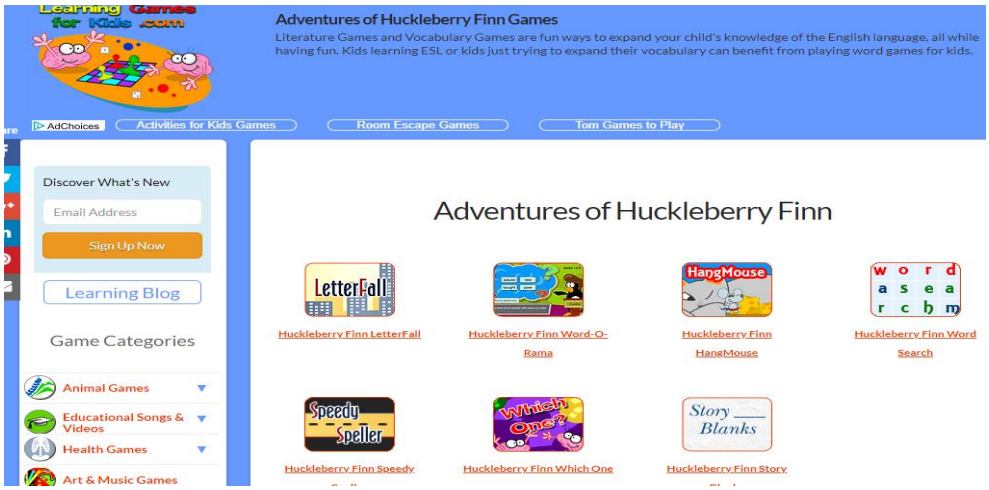

Figure 4.17 Screenshot of Learning Games for Kids Home Page

2. **Quizlet**

Quizlet is a platform for teachers and students. Teachers can create digital flashcards to foster literacy skills. Quizlet provides engaging and fun activities for students, such as matching games, writing exercises, flashcards, spelling, and quizzes. This tool facilitates teachers' instruction, and it has different languages. Students can either use Quizlet in the classroom and at home to reinforce the content learned in class. Teachers can create their flashcards in a simple way and in a short time. Also, there is another way to use Quizlet that promotes collaboration and competition in the classroom. It is through Quizlet live. Teachers

create the activity and share the code with the students to start the game. Additionally, teachers can assess students through this tool and track students' progress as well.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Quizlet in their classroom.

Quizlet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jo6ITr9yt4Y

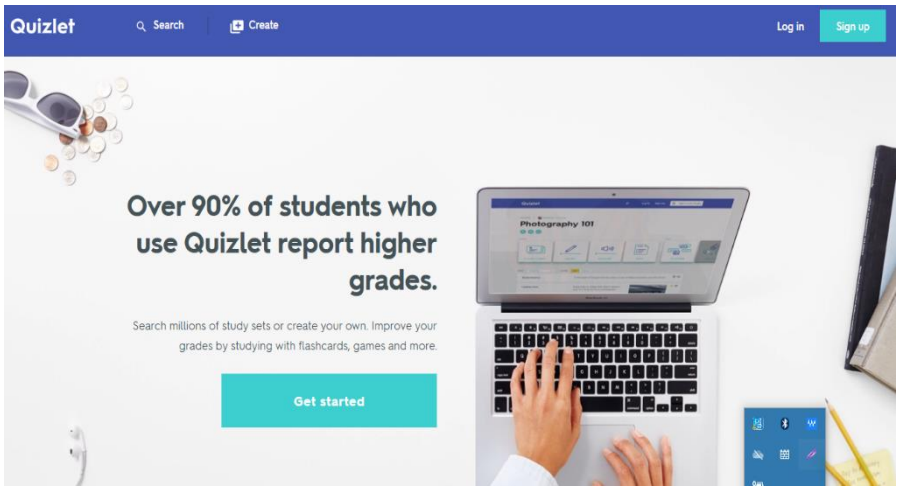

Figure 4.18 Screenshot of Quizlet Home Page

3. **Kahoot**

Kahoot is an excellent digital tool for teachers and students in K-2. Kahoot keeps students engaged in class and promotes collaboration and communication. Kahoot allows teachers to create activities to do in the classroom and assign activities to do at home as homework. In Kahoot, teachers can find games that are already made by other people and use them for them. Also, teachers can edit those activities and use them as they need. Kahoot allows teachers to create different types of tasks such as unscramble exercises to reinforce writing, comprehension questions of a story, flashcards games, and more. Kahoot also allows teachers to create games for each child or activities in teams. Moreover, Teachers can track students' progress and assess them in each task they do.

The following link includes a tutorial video for teachers where they can learn how to use Kahoot in their classroom. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAfnia7-rMk

Kahoot for students: https://kahoot.it/ and Kahoot for teachers: https://kahoot.com/

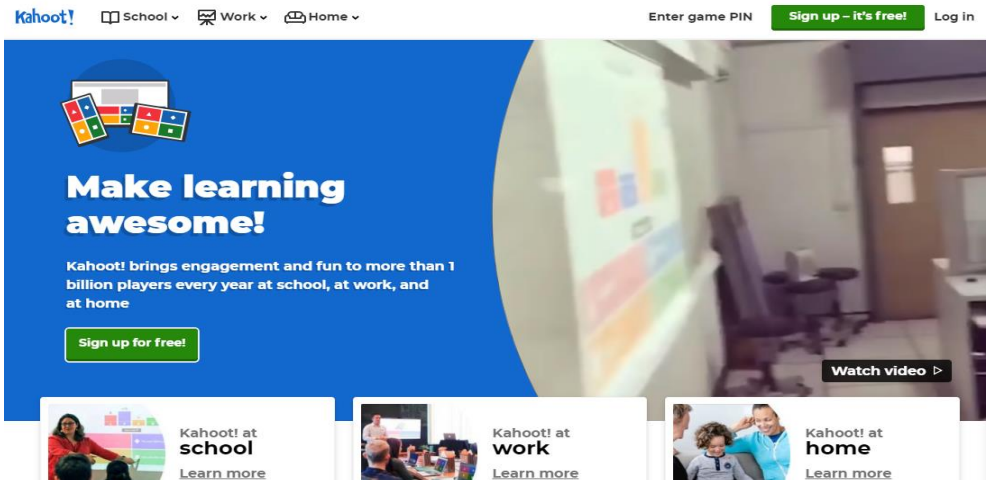

Figure 4.19 Screenshot of Kahoot Home Page

4. **Educational Games for Kids**

Educational Games for Kids has excellent resources for teachers and students to develop students' literacy skills in the classroom and at home in K-2. This tool contains various digital learning games where students can learn by playing. The games that are included relate to sight words, alphabet, matching games, sentences unscramble, sounds, and more interactive and fun activities. By using this platform, students can reinforce the content learned in class and develop their language skills.

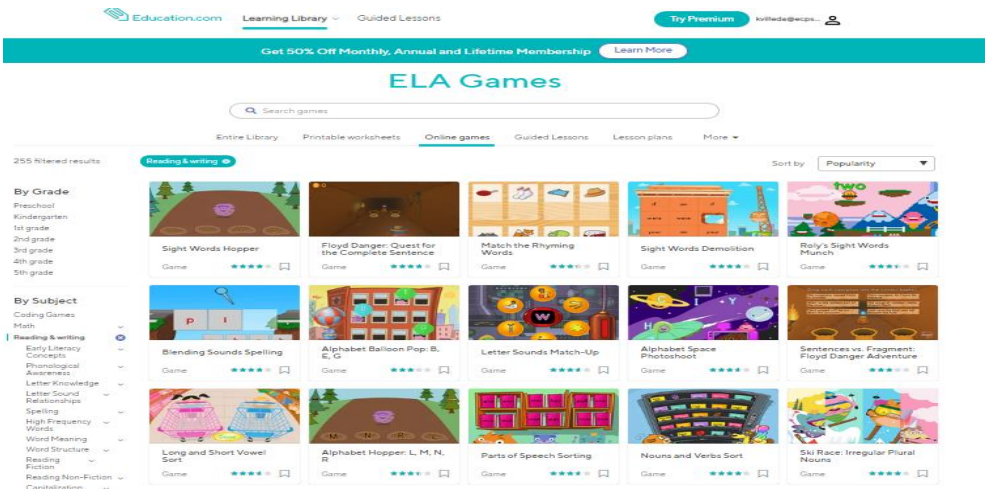

Figure 4.20 Screenshot of Educational Games for Kids Home Page

5. **Starfall**

Starfall is a useful digital tool for teachers and students that has games to develop students' literacy skills in K-2. By using this platform, students enjoy learning and are engaged in class. Students can listen and read vocabulary words, practice spelling, phonics, and listen to songs. This tool emphasizes phonemic awareness and sight words with audiovisual learning activities. Starfall has many benefits for building students' literacy skills. Also, all the activities in Starfall are aligned with the Common Core state standards in English language arts. Additionally, this tool encourages and motivates children to become confident in their learning. Moreover, Starfall is available to use in the classroom and at home. Parents can help students at home to build their different skills and practice the activities that are on this platform.

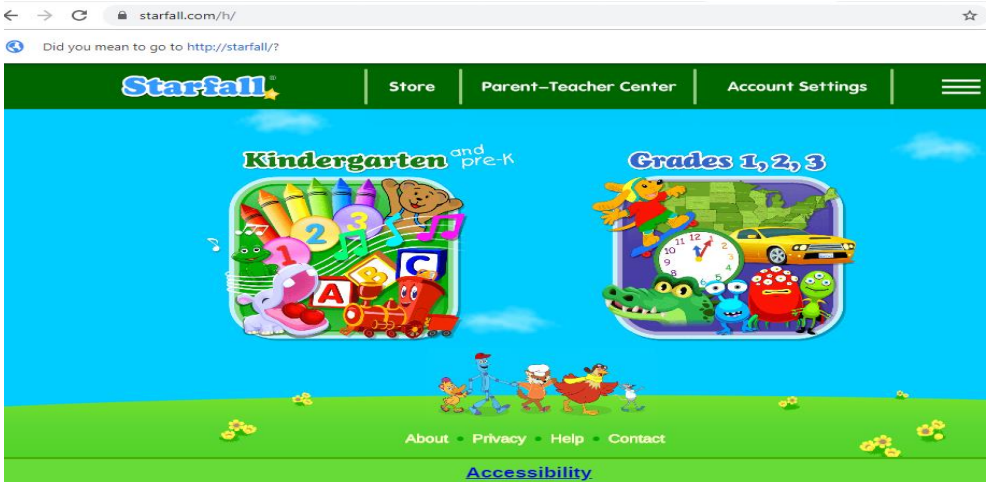

Figure 4.20 Screenshot of Starfall Home Page

Chapter Five: Conclusion

In the 21st century, the use of technology has been significant in education and the world. Technology facilitates communication among people. Also, with technology advancing, more people have access to meaningful information on the internet. The use of technology helps us in different areas, especially in education. Having access to technology in every classroom is an excellent opportunity for teachers and students to learn actively. It becomes easy for many teachers to teach their lessons using different digital learning tools. Using technology for ELLs brings significant benefits for them. It creates an enjoyable learning environment while they use digital tools in the classroom. Additionally, the use of digital tools helps them to develop their English and literacy skills by listening, reading, speaking, and writing as many times as they need. Moreover, ELLs can have access to different digital learning tools at school and at home, having this opportunity allows ELLs to continue learning the target language and reviewing the previous content learned.

Technology has many advantages, not only for educators, but also for ELLs, parents, administrators, and other people involved in the school. It is evident that when teachers use technology in their instruction, students are more engaged and participate effectively in most of the activities developed in class, especially in K-2 classrooms where children are between the age of five to eight years old. Children need more activities that create interest to learn in a fun way and feel happy at school. The environment at school matters for students; it should be a space where students enjoy every activity in the classroom and feel that school is a fun place to learn. Through the use of technology in the classroom, ELLs can have access to powerful digital tools that will allow them to feel excited about learning.

With the creation of the website, I intend to encourage every educator to use technology in their classroom. Furthermore, I hope to make them aware of the benefits that

technology brings to their students' learning. The use of technology facilitates teachers' instruction. By finding various digital learning tools for literacy, teachers can implement these tools into their lessons to help ELLs to develop their different literacy skills, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Moreover, using digital learning tools in the classroom and at home, ELLs can practice their reading, phonics, reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary, spelling, and more skills. Taking into consideration that many ELLs come with low English proficiency in the classroom, the use of technology can help students to overcome those language barriers and improve their English skills by using the different digital tools that are available on the internet. On the website, there are various games, stories, eBooks, videos, and more resources that can help ELLs in their learning. Additionally, by using these digital learning tools, ELLs will be more encouraged and motivated about learning at school.

Through the development of this project, I learned meaningful strategies to implement in K-2 classrooms using digital learning tools. I hope that many teachers, ELLs, parents, and others, take advantage of this website that contains excellent digital learning tools to help ELLs to improve their literacy skills in K-2. I believe that with the creation of this website, many people will benefit from it since it is online. Teachers that are in this country and different parts of the world can also have access to these useful resources.

While I was creating this project, I thought that many teachers need to know about the tremendous digital learning tools and resources that they can find online and in order to implement them in their instruction. Since many teachers complain about not having enough knowledge about using technology in the classroom, I wanted to express and share with other educators my experience using digital tools in instruction and how these great resources can help ELLs to learn effectively. In general, I hope to reach many people with this project and

that they learn how to implement these excellent digital tools in their classroom to help students to grow in their different areas.

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